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ABSTRACT

Given today's emerging information-oriented high tech occupational society, fundamental changes are needed in both the educational system and in the occupational society itself to help persons make the transition from schooling to employment. The new concept of "transition from schooling to employment" is one that recognizes: (1) the reality and importance of both paid and unpaid work; (2) the classroom as a workplace; (3) the student as a worker; and (4) the teacher as a worker. Work-based learning approaches such as technical preparation, co-operative education, and youth apprenticeship appear potentially helpful. However, none of these approaches is sufficient by itself to effect the changes needed to prepare persons to be productive workers. The specific vocational skills component provided by vocational/technical education must be supplemented by several additional "transition" components to be developed early in life and to comprise part of the fabric of schooling, including the basic academic skills, productive work habits, a personally meaningful set of work values, general employability skills, career decision-making skills, and a set of job-seeking/finding/getting/holding skills. Additionally, changes in employer attitudes toward youth and the educational system are necessary. For example, employers must recognize incipient changes in the workplace, change their low regard for the high school diploma, and also recognize and support some form of postsecondary vocational/technical education for those who are leaving high school but are not four-year college bound. (MSF)

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Career Education and Transition From Schooling To Employment

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Introduction

The concept of "transition from school to work" should be abolished. The basic thing wrong with this concept is that it implies school isn't "work." So long as this concept remains as the organizing force behind efforts to help persons move from educational institutions into the occupational society, such efforts are doomed to minimal success. A major strategy useful in helping persons make this "transition" centers around recognizing that "work" exists in both of these settings - i.e., in both schools and in the occupational society in general. This is not simply a matter of semantics. On the contrary, it is vital to recognize if the "transition" process is to be effective nationwide.

The concept of "transition from school to work" badly needs to be replaced with the concept of "transition from schooling to employment." This new concept is one that recognizes (a) the reality and importance of both paid and unpaid work, (b) the classroom as a workplace, (c) the student as a worker, and (d) the teacher as a worker. That concept is used throughout this article.

The basic vehicles for use in helping persons make the transition from schooling to employment are (1) the education system, and (2) the occupational society. Fundamental changes in both are needed. These changes should begin by recognizing the need for collaborative partnerships aimed at joint efforts to solve transition from schooling to employment problems. Such changes should be aimed at producing school leavers who (a) possess the basic academic skills required for success in the emerging information-oriented high tech occupational society, (b) a set of productive work habits as part of their typical behavior, (c) a set of personally meaningful work values that lead them to want to work, (d) a set of job seeking/finding/getting/holding skills, and (e) a set of specific vocational skills needed for quality performance in one or more occupations. These are the characteristics employers look for when they seek to hire new workers - and that they believe are missing in most current school leavers seeking immediate employment.

When viewed in this manner, efforts such as (a) youth apprenticeship, (b) co-operative education, (c) work experience programs, (d) experiential education, (e) tech prep, and other forms of what is currently being called "work-based learning" can be properly viewed primarily as vehicles for use in helping persons make some but not all of these changes. They are necessary but not sufficient. A broader perspective is needed. Part of that perspective can be provided by considering the contributions career education can make to increasing the effectiveness of the total effort. The second needed perspective concerns contributions career guidance and counseling can make. Here, concentration is placed primarily only on contributions to be made through career education.

This document is divided into two parts. First, needed changes in the occupational society will be discussed. Following this, needed changes in the education system will be specified. If both sets of changes are made, the transition from schooling to employment for both youth and adults should be significantly improved.

Changes Needed In The Occupational Society

Introduction

The topic of "transition from schooling to employment" needs to be discussed within the framework of changes in school leavers desired by employers and employer willingness to hire school leavers when and if these changes are made. A set of developmental, longitudinal efforts is needed. No "quick fix" short term solution can be expected.

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Changes Needed In Occupational Tasks

The 1991 SCANS report (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991) described several desired facets of what it called "tomorrow's workplace" including (a) flexible production, (b) customized production, (c) decentralized control, (d) flexible automation, (e) on-line quality control, (f) work teams, (g) multi-skilled workers, (h) authority delegated to workers, (i) labor-management cooperation, (j) screening for basic skills abilities, and (k) work force as an investment. These are clearly related to the anticipated changing occupational structure described by Marshall and Tucker (1992) in their book Thinking For A Living.

These predicted changes in America's workplace are clearly moving in the direction of giving more authority and more freedom to decide coupled with both more responsibility and more accountability for the individual worker. As this occurs, chances that individuals will find "work" rather than ""drudgery" in their job assignments will almost surely increase. To the extent this happens, individual workers will (a) better understand the importance of their specific job in the context of the total work organization, (b) develop greater pride in themselves and in their job assignments, and (c) be more motivated to produce high quality job performance. All of these things should serve to increase worker productivity. Certainly, they make clear the fact that education/work relationships need to become both closer and more important.

Changes Needed In Employer Attitudes Toward Youth And The K-12 Education System

One of the most important current barriers to successful "schooling to employment transition" efforts can be found in the low regard employers have for the K-12 education system. By and large, employers appear to be viewing the high school diploma primarily as a certificate of attendance, not as a certificate of readiness for employment (USDOL, 1989). So long as employers hold the K-12 education system in such low regard, it should not be considered strange to find that youth graduating from high school have similar attitudes of distrust and lack of respect for the K-12 education they have received.

The crucial importance of the K-12 education system in providing youth with (a) high quality basic academic skills; (b) a set of productive work habits, and (c) a set of personally meaningful work values that will increase educational productivity must be recognized by both employers and by K-12 educators. Those employers who consider the K-12 education system to be merely a "holding station" for youth are missing out on opportunities to help solve some of the most important "transition" problems facing America. There can be no real hope for employers who regard the K-12 education system as hopeless. Employers must, instead, look for and find ways of working collaboratively with K-12 educators to provide youth with these kinds of benefits.

As employers become involved with K-12 educators in these kinds of activities, they must simultaneously recognize and support the need for most non-four-year-college-bound high school leavers to seek some form of postsecondary vocational/technical education prior to seeking entry into the occupational society. These are basic first steps that must be taken if significant improvement in "transition from schooling to employment" successes are to occur.

Current employer practices that cause them to discriminate against employing youth based on the fact they are younger than other applicants must be abandoned. A system of hiring the best qualified applicant - regardless of age - should be installed. Such a system exists on paper almost everywhere but it is not common practice.

Changes Needed In Partnerships With the Education System

If the K-12 education system is to change in terms of better readying youth for employment, the occupational society itself must accept some of the responsibility for helping to make such change possible. For example, elementary school teachers are increasingly being asked to help their pupils better understand the career implications of basic academic skills through showing pupils how such skills are important in occupational performance. The problem is that most elementary school teachers don't understand very much about the career implications of basic skills themselves. If workers from the broader occupational society are brought into elementary school classrooms and asked to show pupils how they use basic academic skills in their jobs, pupil motivation to learn such skills is likely to be increased for most pupils. If classes of elementary school pupils are encouraged to make field trip visits to occupational work sites where they can observe and interact with workers about their use of basic academic skills, this, too, should help.

Equally important as helping pupils understand the importance of learning basic academic skills is the importance of helping pupils understand the nature and importance of work in the changing occupational society. The need for occupational resource persons to help elementary school pupils understand what these persons do in their jobs is not nearly so important as helping them understand why what they do is important and needed. The kinds of adult occupational role models most needed by today's pupils are those that clearly illustrate how motivated persons become more productive workers. This is not something that can wait until the secondary school years to be initiated. On the contrary, even the early elementary school years are late for helping youth understand the nature and importance of work - not just jobs - in total lifestyle. If this is to occur, partnerships between the education system and the occupational society must be formed and operate throughout the entire K-12 education system.

An outstanding example of the kinds of "partnerships" needed at the K-6 level can be found by studying the "KAPOW" program of Grand Metropolitan, Incorporated (1993). "KAPOW" stands for "Kids And The Power of Work". The emphasis placed on the concept of "work" makes this title particularly appropriate. The KAPOW program calls for each participating elementary school to be "adopted", in effect, by one of the Grand Metropolitan companies operating in a particular community. These "partnerships" are now operating successfully in 30+ communities. The model and the materials needed to operate similar projects in communities nationwide now exist and can be obtained from the KAPOW offices of Grand Metropolitan.

Changes Needed In "Transition From Schooling to Employment" Practices

Most youth leaving today's secondary schools and seeking immediate employment in the occupational society experience great difficulty in finding opportunities to participate in the primary labor market. Instead, they tend to find the only occupational opportunities readily available to them in the secondary labor market (Hamilton, 1990). The secondary labor market typically provides low pay, low skill, no tenure, no vacation, no health benefits, no opportunity for advancement, and no retirement benefits types of jobs. Currently, we find many high school leavers entering and remaining in secondary labor market jobs for an extended period of time - perhaps 10 to 12 years - before realizing they need some kind of marketable vocational skill if they are to enter into the primary labor market.

The results can easily be seen by examining data from today's community college students enrolled in specific vocational skill training programs. The average age of such students appears to be in the 29 - 32 years old range. By the time such persons have spent 10 years or more in the secondary labor market, most have, to be sure, learned the kinds of productive work habits required in order to hold some jobs in the occupational society. Most such persons have not, unfortunately, learned very much about work. That is, most jobs in the secondary labor market

can be more accurately described as being "drudgery" than as being "work". Employers are looking for "workers", not "drudgers". Still, they seem to give preference to hiring persons who have spent a number of years in the secondary labor market over hiring youth who are recent graduates of vocational/technical education. This is a topic deserving of serious study.

America's chances of being able to compete effectively in the international marketplace will almost surely be reduced if current practices that find many high school leavers entering the secondary labor market for an extended period of time prior to securing some form of vocational/technical training at the postsecondary level are continued. A great need exists for more and more youth to reduce the length of time between leaving the secondary school and enrolling in some form of postsecondary education.

Those "transition from schooling to employment" programs that emphasize placing high school leavers in the secondary labor market appear very likely to find a multitude of jobs available for these youth in that market. While this kind of effort will probably continue to be needed by some persons, it cannot, in these times, be considered as adequate for most youth. The basic question facing most high school leavers is no longer "Should I go to college or should I seek a job in the occupational society?" Instead, today's question for most youth must be "Should I enter a four year college/university or should I seek some other form of postsecondary education prior to trying to get a job?" The "transition to employment" activities appropriate for use today will, for most youth, be centered around transition from a high school to some kind of postsecondary educational institution and <u>then</u> to jobs in the primary labor market.

This nationwide trend toward equipping youth with specific vocational skills at the postsecondary level prior to seeking to help them make the transition from schooling to employment carries major challenges both for employers and for the education system. If employers continue to call for applicants with higher job skills, it is essential that those youth who obtain such skills at the postsecondary sub-baccalaureate level be able to find jobs in the primary labor market. If employers continue to give hiring preferences based simply on identifying applicants over Age 25, for example, they will force many highly skilled youth into the secondary labor market. This, in turn, will discourage many of today's high school youth from seeking such training thus causing a serious shortage of skilled workers. This is a challenge employers must accept if America is to compete successfully in the upcoming international marketplace.

<u>Changes Needed In The Education System</u>

<u>Introduction</u>

When the five kinds of pupil changes identified earlier are considered in terms of appropriate responsibilities to be assigned various kinds of educators, it is clear that <u>all</u> educators should be involved in helping pupils with each change. It is equally clear that who takes the "lead" role as opposed to either an "action" or a "supportive" role will vary depending on the kind of change being considered. If three types of educators are considered including (a) vocational educators, (b) career guidance and counseling personnel (primarily school counselors), and (c) career educators (primarily K-12 classroom teachers), it seems logical to assign roles in the following manner:

Kind of Benefit for Pupil	Lead Role	Action Role	Supportive Role
Specific Vocational Skills	Vocational Ed	Career Education	Career Guidance
Career Decision Making Skills	Career Guidance	Career Education	Vocational Ed
Personal Work Values	Career Guidance	Career Education	Vocational Ed
Good Work Habits	Career Education	Vocational Ed	Career Guidance
Basic Academic Skills	Career Education	Vocational Ed	Career Guidance
Educational Productivity	Career Education	Vocational Ed	Career Guidance

To the extent that changes needed in the Education system are viewed only from the standpoint of specific occupational skills, it can and should be handled by the vocational/technical education movement at both the secondary and postsecondary sub-baccalaureate degree levels. To the extent concerns are expressed for (a) increasing educational productivity in the entire system, (b) providing students with good work habits, (c) helping students acquire a personally meaningful set of work values, and/or (d) helping students in the career decision making process, it is essential that both a strong "career education" component and a strong "career guidance" component be inserted into the total set of changes needed in the education system.

This section begins with a brief outline of major changes needed in vocational education. Following this, some of the potential contributions of career education in effecting such changes are discussed. The potential contributions of career guidance and counseling is a topic to be discussed in a later document.

Changes Needed In Secondary vs Postsecondary Vocational/Technical Education

The emerging information oriented, high technology occupational society calls for specific occupational skills at a higher level than can be mastered by most non-four-year-college-bound high school youth. Increasingly, the teaching of specific occupational skills is being moved from the secondary to the postsecondary, sub-baccalaureate level. What was formerly secondary school vocational education is now moving in the direction of concentrating on helping high school pupils contemplating vocational/technical education acquire a set of general employability skills coupled with a strong emphasis on both career awareness and career exploration activities carried out in partnerships with the business/industry community. Where specific occupational skills are still being taught at the secondary school level, they are increasingly being viewed as beginning steps in a vocational/technical program that will culminate in completion of a related vocational/technical education program being offered at some postsecondary sub-baccalaureate institution. Secondary school vocational/technical education is currently greatly reducing its emphasis on preparing high school age youth with the kinds of complex occupational skills required for success in the coming high technology occupational society. At the same time, it is increasing its emphasis on various aspects of career education and other aspects of career development. Under the banner of "work-based learning", secondary school vocational education is markedly increasing its emphasis on various forms of experiential education. All of these kinds of changes appear to be appropriate ways of helping many secondary education youth move toward becoming ready for productive participation in the changing occupational society.

Changes Needed In Mastery of Basic Academic Skills: Contributions of Career Education

As America moves toward an information oriented, high technology occupational society, the need for school leavers to possess clear competencies in reading, mathematics, oral and written communications, and computer usage grows more important each year. It is no longer enough simply to identify those who "flunk" courses designed to provide them with these skills. Minimum levels of achievement must be identified and met for almost all K-12 youth. It seems inevitable now that some kind of national minimum standards will be set and that all youth seeking to make the transition from schooling to employment will be required to meet these standards. The basic academic skills have never been more important as preparation for employment. The private sector has a right to expect that these standards will be met. Career education is one of several ways available to educators and the private sector for ensuring this through providing youth with a clear set of motivations for learning basic academic skills and thus increasing educational productivity.

Changes Needed In Educational Productivity: Contributions of Career Education

American industry has a long record of success in increasing worker productivity. There is every reason to believe - and no reason not to believe - that the basic rules that have been validated for increasing worker productivity in business/industry will serve equally well in increasing educational productivity. Certainly, if the efforts to increase competencies in the basic academic skills are to be successful, the American system of K-12 education must become more productive than it currently appears to be. Career education places a high priority on helping all professional educators to follow these rules. If one thinks of both students and teachers as workers, the following basic rules for increasing productivity can be easily applied:

Rule #1 - Show the worker the importance of the work task. The teaching/learning process typically divides itself into two segments including (a) imparting substantive content to pupils and (b) motivating pupils to learn the substantive content. One of the very best ways of motivating pupils to learn the substantive content is to demonstrate to pupils how that content is used in the occupational society. Far too many teachers are currently failing to follow this rule when interacting with their pupils. When pupils ask "why should I learn this?" many teachers have no good answers to provide that will really motivate the pupils to learn. Career education advocates urge teachers to follow Rule #1 by showing pupils and/or asking occupational resource persons to show pupils how the basic academic skills are needed and valuable in occupational success. If teachers understand some of the career implications of their subject matter, both teachers and pupils should be more aware of the importance of the subject and more dedicated to making the teaching/learning process a productive and positive undertaking.

Rule #2 - Reward work when it occurs. In the case of the classroom, this means teachers should seek to find some way of providing each pupil who honestly tries to complete a given assignment some kind of credit for having done so. The basic principle here is that, if we want the pupil to undertake the work we ask him/her to do tomorrow, we should provide the pupil with some form of credit/recognition/appreciation/reward for the work she/he does today. In far too many classrooms there is (a) no appreciable difference shown by the teacher with respect to students who try versus those who don't and (b) no credit given for accomplishments unless they meet a particular standard. Pupils are typically reminded of when they don't accomplish things but are seldom recognized when they really try to do what is asked of them. This should change.

This same rule applies, of course, to improving productivity of teachers. In far too many schools, those teachers who try a variety of approaches - including a career education approach - to increase pupil motivation to learn are treated by the building principal no differently than those teachers who ignore pleas to do so. No wonder that efforts to encourage individual teachers to be creative

and innovative in the teaching/learning process often find many teachers being less than enthusiastic in their reactions to such requests. If increases in pupil learning are to occur, it is essential that Rule #2 be followed with respect to both pupils and their teachers.

Rule #3 - Insert variety in workplace activities. It has been known for many years that, if workers are asked to do exactly the same things in the same ways day after day, it isn't long before worker boredom increases - and worker productivity decreases. This rule applies very well to both pupils and teachers in the K-12 education system. That is why, in career education, we urge teachers to use a variety of instructional methods, to insert both experiential and cognitive activities in the teaching/learning process, to frequently use community resource persons to help motivate pupil learning, and to make extensive use of pupil field trips. By using a "careers" approach to pupil motivation, it is relatively easy for both teachers and pupils to follow Rule #3.

Rule #4 - Provide the worker with a sense of "ownership" in his/her work. Something "invented" by the individual will typically be used with more enthusiasm by that individual than will occur if the entire procedure is provided by others and the worker is told to "just follow these procedures". That is why, in career education, teachers are urged to "invent" their own strategies for helping pupils see education/work relationships and increasing career awareness opportunities for pupils. This is also why career education urges practices that provide pupils with the kinds of assignments that allow pupils to figure out for themselves what they consider to be the best ways of reaching the specified goals. A sense of "ownership" can, by emphasizing the concept of accountability for both teachers and pupils, be a very effective way of increasing educational productivity on the part of both. Moreover, it encourages both teachers and pupils to use the kinds of "thinking skills" advocated by persons such as Marshall and Tucker (1992).

Rule #5 - Teach workers how to work in teams. Increasingly, the major tasks to be performed by workers in the emerging information oriented high technology society are being viewed as team efforts where each individual team member has specific kinds of authority, responsibility, and accountability. Teamwork is not something most people do naturally. Instead, it is, for almost all persons, a learned kind of behavior with most of the learning taking place in an experiential learning framework. Since we know that more and more adult workers will be asked to work in teams, America's K-12 education system should be actively engaged in teaching the basic principles of teamwork in experiential learning situations for their pupils. Creating one or more "products" that can be recognized by all team members as something that "we" did together in which "I" had a role to play holds high potential as a means of increasing educational productivity. This "rule" is becoming more and more important to follow in preparing pupils for work.

The principles of teamwork apply fully as much to teachers as they do to pupils. Career education advocates strongly recommend "team teaching" to professional educators that calls for each teacher to make a set of unique contributions toward team goals of increasing educational productivity among both pupils and teachers.

Rule #6 - Emphasize and reward the practice of good work habits. Since the classroom is a workplace and pupils are workers, it follows that, during the K-12 school years, pupils will acquire and practice certain work habits. Whether the work habits they acquire are positive or negative contributions toward increasing educational productivity is open to question. The fact that they do acquire work habits during these years is not. If educational productivity is to be improved, it is crucial that K-12 pupils acquire a positive set of work values that hold potential for helping them to become productive adult workers. If pupils spend the K-12 school years learning

what, in effect, are bad work habits, it is unlikely that they will immediately transform themselves into productive workers when they make the transition from schooling to employment. The next section of this article is devoted to this topic.

Changes Needed In Pupil Work Habits: Contributions of Career Education

"Habits" are ways of behaving that, when done often enough over a long period of time, become almost automatic for the person. The kinds of habits typically held by highly productive workers have been well known for many years. One of the priority goals of career education is to engage in vigorous efforts to provide students, beginning in the early elementary school years, with productive work habits. The kinds of work habits emphasized by career education include:

1. Come to work (to school) on time.
2. Do your best to carry out each assignment you are given.
3. Complete your assignments by the time they are due.
4. Follow directions.
5. Cooperate with your fellow workers.
6. Set up and use a schedule for getting your work done.
7. Keep your workplace as neat and clean as possible.
8. Organize a work plan every day that allows you to do things in a priority order.
9. Be polite to those with whom you work.
10. Be considerate of your fellow workers - don't make things difficult for them.
11. Be responsible and accountable for what you do on your job each day.
12. Be dependable - make sure others can count on you to do your job.

It will be just as easy for elementary school teachers to encourage pupils to develop and use good work habits as it would be to let them practice bad work habits. If good work habits are emphasized throughout the elementary school years, it will not be difficult for them to be reinforced by secondary school teachers. If this happens, educational productivity during the K-12 years - and thus pupil academic achievement - is almost sure to increase. So, too, are chances of them using such work habits as adult workers.

If pupils are to be encouraged to develop and practice good work habits, it is essential, of course, that they be provided some kind of recognition and/or reward for doing so. One possible way of doing this that would also serve to emphasize the importance of developing such habits would be for teachers to make periodic reports to pupils and their parents with respect to the extent to which pupils are practicing good work habits. Many years ago, such efforts were routinely made in many elementary and secondary schools through dividing the pupil's report card in two sections, one of which reported grades in academic achievement and the other teacher grades on a set of identified work habits considered important by the school. That section was often called "Deportment". If a "Deportment" section of the report card were to be reinstalled in today's K-12 schools, it could - and should - emphasize the nature and importance of productive work habits both to the pupils who are graded and to their teachers who will be asked to report the grades.

Obviously, many other possible approaches to helping both pupils and teachers emphasize and develop good work habits could be easily developed and tested. Until and unless some plan is developed for doing so, problems with respect to development and use of productive work habits on the part of both pupils and employed adult workers will continue to exist. Good work habits cannot be expected to develop in either an incidental or in an accidental manner. Career education places a high priority on the development and use of good work habits on the part of all persons beginning in the early elementary school years. It is a priority that deserves to be recognized, supported, and joined by all of the currently popular "transition" programs - including both tech prep and youth apprenticeship.

Changes Needed In Pupil Work Values: Contributions of Career Education

From the beginning, career education advocates have emphasized, as one of their major goals, helping all persons want to engage in work - paid and/or unpaid. The word "work" has been defined as:

> "Conscious effort, other than that whose primary purpose is either coping or relaxation, aimed at providing societally acceptable benefits to oneself and/or to oneself and others" (Hoyt, 1991, p. 23)

With this definition the four letter word "work" can be meaningfully discussed for all persons as something that takes place from the preschool years through almost all of the retirement years. Certainly, it is a concept that can be applied to the pupil as a worker and to the teacher as a worker within the context of the teaching/learning process. There should be no need for the pupil to leave the classroom in order to obtain work experience. What have been called "work experience programs" are more properly thought of as opportunities to expand one's "work experience", not to engage, for the first time, in actual work. The development of a personally meaningful set of work values should be a major goal of the K-12 education system. If this goal is reached, chances of finding adult workers with strong desires to work will be greatly enhanced.

It is important to recognize that development of "work values" is quite different from development of a "work ethic". "Work values" represent a set of reasons why the individual has chosen to work whereas the "work ethic" represents a set of reasons why the individual feels obligated to work. In this sense, "work values" can be thought of as benefits accruing to the individual as a result of the work he/she has done. The "work ethic", on the other hand, is stated in terms of benefits that will come to others as a result of the work performed by a given individual - not benefits coming to the individual."Work values" are things one owes to himself/herself. The "work ethic" is a set of things people feel they owe to society. Career educators do not object to use of the work ethic but it is "work values", not the "work ethic", that are their primary concerns.

It is also important to recognize the differences between "work values" and "occupational values". When career educators talk about "work values", they are thinking of the basic generic reasons persons have for wanting to work without regard to any specific occupation. "Occupational values", on the other hand, are related to why a person chooses one kind of work over all others. "Occupational values", for example, that are related to occupational choices, include such values as a desire for: (a) money; (b) job security; (c) variety in job assignments, (d) opportunities for travel, (e) opportunities for advancement, (f) geographic location, (g) the presence of friends working in the same occupational setting, and (h) retirement benefits. These values are the primary domain of professional career counselors, not career educators or vocational educators. They are an obvious high priority for use in helping pupils in the career decision making process.

The kinds of work values career education seeks to help pupils develop during the K-12 school years can be stated in many ways. One way of doing so is to list a variety of kinds of benefits persons may receive from the work they do. Among the things pupils should learn regarding what "work" can do for those who perform it are the following:

1. Work can be a way of earning money that will allow the person to support himself/herself.
2. Work can be a way of giving persons a sense of accomplishment - of having done.
3. Work can be a way of helping a person better understand who she/he is in terms of what she/he can do.

4. Work can be a way for persons to understand that they are needed by others - that it is important they exist today and will exist tomorrow.
5. Work can be a way for the individual to recognize she/he is contributing toward making the world a better place.
6. Work can be a way in which the individual develops a feeling that he/she can excel in something - that he/she is someone special.
7. Work can be a way of doing something of value to others that can be enjoyed by the individual worker.
8. Work can be a way for the individual to develop a sense of competence - of ability.
9. Work can be a way for the individual to develop a personal sense of pride in himself or herself based on one's ability to do things in a high quality manner.
10. Work can be a way of helping the person recognize the importance of his/her job.
11. Work can be a way for persons to use time in a constructive manner.

Work values - like work habits - are characteristics to be developed - not something the individual possesses at birth. The development of work values - like the development of work habits - can be either a positive or a negative aspect of the K-12 education experience. If positive work values are not emphasized, it is likely, in today's society, that many youth may grow up with negative work values - i.e., with an active dislike of work and a feeling they would rather be doing other things. Many of today's youth need to consider "work" as a possible alternative lifestyle.

Concluding Thoughts

America faces serious problems regarding how to help both youth and many adults make the transition from schooling to employment. The currently most popular proposals for use in solving these problems are being pictured as various forms of what, generically, is being called "work-based learning". Each of these new approaches - including both tech prep and youth apprenticeship - appears to hold high potential for being helpful. None, however, can be considered to be sufficient to meet the needs for change in preparing persons to be productive workers.

Unless serious efforts to meet the "transition from schooling to employment" problems are undertaken as longitudinal, developmental efforts beginning in the early elementary school years, the chances of their long run success are certain to be small. The specific vocational skills component provided by vocational/technical education must be supplemented by a number of additional "transition" components that need to be developed beginning early in life including: (a) the basic academic skills; (b) productive work habits; (c) a personally meaningful set of work values, (d) general employability skills, (e) career decision making skills, and (f) a set of job seeking/finding/getting/holding skills. The best way to ensure that these components will be effectively developed and used is to add career education programs and comprehensive career guidance programs to the currently popular "work-based learning" programs.

If all of these changes are made, youth are almost sure to become good workers. Valuable as that is, it is even more valuable to recognize that, if these changes are implemented, youth will also become good students, good citizens, and good family members. The total effort will serve as a set of significant and much needed steps in America's educational reform.

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